

The
Holy Spirit
In Missions

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**A CONSIDERATION
FOR THE PRESENT
CRISIS IN WORLD
CONDITIONS . . .**

Let us first consider what so often we forget, that the Holy Spirit is a person, a Divine person, co-equal with God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son. Let us also pause to think how near He is, "nearer than hands and feet," that He dwells in the heart, and that the Word declares He never leaves the heart into which He enters. Jesus said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you," and then set before His disciples the promise of the coming of the Comforter. Therefore, when we read Hebrews 13:5-6, with the words, "I will never leave thee," we recognize the ever-present indwelling Christ personified in the Holy Spirit. From this throne-room of the heart the Holy Spirit will guide us through the medium of the Word into the path marked out for us in the purposes of God, and a part of this path has a relation that is vital to the great work of Jesus Christ in the saving of sinners, leading us to the missionary vision and purpose. Five things the Spirit sets before us in this missionary vision.

His Program.

From the fall of Adam to the present time, and likewise to the end of the present world, the Spirit has had one great purpose as the inspiration for His program; viz., to redeem the race who had borne the image and likeness of the godhead but had fallen through sin. To do it, Jesus was born of the Holy Ghost; baptized by the Holy Ghost; empowered by the Holy Ghost; having died, was raised by the Holy Ghost, that a vicarious atonement might be made; and then, the Holy Spirit declared to the apostles the divine purpose that they should be witnesses of that work which had been done in Christ Jesus for the redemption of the race, and that the witness was to be borne in "Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth."

This has never been rescinded as a command nor changed as a purpose, and all those who bear the name Christian are called to fill a place in the Spirit's program.

His Preparation.

However, He has chosen to divide the labor, calling some to go, and some to pray and give, according to their ability. It is vitally necessary that Christians should know into which one of these classes the Holy Spirit has led them. We have heard it said, "A need known, and ability to meet that need, constituted a call," but we are not in sympathy with that, and have never thought that it was doing justice to the personal Holy Spirit. That He should have to use so abstract a means of indicating His will for the Christian worker has never seemed at all satisfactory to us; nor is it in accordance with incidents in Acts, as in the case of Paul and Barnabas, where the Spirit said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." We are convinced that when the Spirit said that of these men, it was because He had already prepared them for the service, and if the call of the Holy Spirit is waited for by willing hearts, then we shall witness the separation by the Holy Spirit of Christians for the Ministry, for Church and Sunday School work, and for the larger work of Missions; who, being thus called by Him, will most assuredly be well prepared first, which thing is also true of those called to pray and give.

It is also noticeable as one reads the New Testament that the Holy Spirit's preparation consisted chiefly in the possession, by those called to service, of a divinely given understanding of the Word of God. We wish that in this day there might be more first-hand information received by way of the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit from the Word of God, and the consequent understanding of the divine purposes and plans by those who are in Christian work, for we are convinced that many of the divisions now so unfortunate and due chiefly to differences in opinion in non-essentials would then be lost from the minds of the children of God, and the oneness which Jesus prayed for, and which the Corinthian epistle was written to urge, would become a reality.

His preparation is supremely a realization of Himself as a person, and of His ability and willingness to make known the Word of God; yea, even more, His call would be dependent upon His having made known the Word.

His Power.

We remember some years ago having frequently heard gospel hymns and prayers urging the Lord to send "the power," and we joined in the petitions and songs, although now we look back to realize that all the time He, the Holy Spirit, one with God and Christ, equally possessing all power, was abiding in our hearts, because we were God's sons or daughters, and since He was there, there was no need to call for power—HE is power. Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," "And, lo, I am with you alway."

What we need in our relation to Missions at the hand of the Holy Spirit is not that we should have sent down from heaven some overwhelming influence that might be called power, but that with hushed spirit and humbled heart we should realize that He is in us and only desiring that we should yield ourselves for the exercise of His will, and that then He will give us such a vision of the need, and against that, such a vision of His power to meet the need, that we shall realize whether it be for us to go, or to stay and pray, that ours is a fellowship with One who cannot be stopped short of the full accomplishment of His divine purpose, and that that fellowship is a copartnership with the Holy Spirit who makes real to us the words, "For we are workers together with God."

His Perfection.

Much is said at times concerning the subject of perfection in the Christian. We do not want to discuss the correctness or incorrectness of the views of anyone, but we suggest that the believer in Christ is perfect in Christ—in the sense of

completeness, as Christ used the word—and that as He is, so are we in this world; that, so far as our standing is concerned, we are holy as He is holy, and because He is holy. But there is a sense, also, in which there is ever present with the conscientious believer a realization of those failures and weaknesses, and sometimes sins, which are such clear evidence of imperfection in the life.

The situation may be summed up in this word, that the measure of our perfection is the measure of Christ in us as realized by the work of the Holy Spirit. This absolutely eliminates boasting, and we have humbly to face the fact that all which we possess of perfection is the work of that same blessed person, the Holy Spirit of God dwelling within. He works this same perfection in all, including those on the mission fields, bringing them ever more and more into the image of Christ, until they come to "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ Jesus the Lord."

Oh, the joy that must be the crown and glory of those who have had a part, either by prayer and gift, or going, as a worker together with the Holy Spirit in His efforts to bring to perfection the offspring of dark heathenism born anew into the family of God, the inheritance of Christ, and the hope of the believer. This brings us to our next point:

His Prospect.

Hope is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast which maketh not ashamed, and, therefore, the Holy Spirit has set before us in the Word of God a continuous panorama of prospective glory, the inheritance of Christ Jesus the Lord, and the portion of those who have the witness of the Spirit and are joint-heirs with Him. And nowhere in the world do believers need hope more than in their relation to Missions, Home or Foreign, so-called, and it seems to us that just here the Holy Spirit has evidenced the glorious wisdom of His leadership in that nearly all the workers who are facing these tremendous problems

have caught the vision of a coming Lord, and this vision has become the blessed hope, because of its imminence, and also the inspiration to more zealous service, and has been the strong anchor to windward in the days when the storms of difficulty and weariness and ill-health and the outrages of the Devil's scheming have swept in like a flood. Clear above the roar of the tempest has come the voice of the Master, through the Holy Spirit, "Be not afraid, it is I," and over the tossing waves has been extended the outreached hand of Omnipotence, by the same Holy Spirit, to hold sinking Peter and doubting Thomas, and all the rest of us, with the gentle words of rebuke, "O ye of little faith!"

Beloved, catch the vision of the coming days, and as the hope of seeing Him burns within your soul, seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, that you may find His place in the program, His work in your preparation, His power for your need, His perfection for your assurance, and His prospect for your hope. And having these you may go forward to fill full the divine purpose for you, that the Holy Spirit may be able to fulfil His divine purpose for the world, and gather the last members of the Church of Christ who shall make possible, by their coming, the coming of the King, and, "we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

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The Africa Inland Mission is a Faith Mission under the management of Home Councils in Australia, the British Isles and North America. The missionary force at present writing numbers about 200. No appeal for funds is made nor collections taken, the work being supported by offerings that individuals or churches may be led voluntarily to give. For additional literature: for sample copies of "Inland Africa," the monthly organ of the Mission, or for any further information address the Africa Inland Mission, 356 Bridge Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., where the executive offices of the Mission are located. Checks and money orders should be made payable to the Africa Inland Mission.